Holy Miracles Temple's Lunar New Year Ceremonies: Compassion Amid Global Disasters

Photo Courtesy: Joyce Lee (Ruzun Ruohui, the Abbess of Hua Zang Si Temple, led the prayer ceremony to offer blessings and relief on the first day of the Spring Festival.

Holy Miracles Temple welcomed the Lunar New Year with compassion, holding a special prayer ceremony on January 29, 2025, the first day of the Spring Festival, to offer blessings and relief for those suffering from recent calamities. Led by the Abbess of Hua Zang Si Temple, Ruzun Ruohui, the gathering was not just a New Year celebration—it was an opportunity to express gratitude to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, seek their blessings for prosperity and wisdom, and, most importantly, uphold the teachings of H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III by extending kindness to all beings. Participants gathered with sincerity, chanting scriptures, making offerings, and paying homage, knowing that such acts cultivate merit and virtue while inspiring selflessness and compassion.

The ceremony included a reminder to consider the suffering of others, particularly in response to the challenges faced by communities affected by wildfires in Southern California. Ruzun Ruohui spoke about the importance of supporting those in need. Led by the World Buddhism Association Headquarters, various temples and organizations have offered aid, including financial support and essential supplies. The ongoing efforts invite others to take part in helping those impacted by these events.

Photo Courtesy: Joyce Lee (Attendees offered lotus lamps, flowers, and blessing bags to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, seeking blessings for prosperity and wisdom.)

The ceremony began with Runzun Ruohui's opening remarks, followed by sequential offerings and chanting of sacred scriptures. It concluded with the distribution of blessing bags adorned with persimmon flower designs symbolizing prosperity and good fortune.

From January 29 to February 2, the temple remains open for visitors to pay their respects and make offerings, including lotus lamps, blessing bags, and flowers. In Buddhism, "making offerings" extends beyond material contributions; it purifies the soul, diminishes greed and attachment, and cultivates a heart of compassion for all living beings.

Photo Courtesy: Joyce Lee (Attendees offered lotus lamps, flowers, and blessing bags to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, seeking blessings for prosperity and wisdom.)

On February 12, the fifteenth day of the Lunar New Year, the temple will host a special chanting of the Chapter of Universal Gateway of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara in the Lotus Sutra, followed by the distribution of blessing bags prepared during the New Year ceremonies. In times of disaster, such recitation can provide comfort, as the sutra offers reassurance for those who sincerely call upon the Bodhisattva. It serves as a source of support for those facing difficult circumstances.

These ceremonies took place against a backdrop of global tragedy. The year 2025 began with devastating disasters, leaving communities worldwide needing relief. A historic winter storm swept through the Gulf Coast, from Texas to Florida, bringing freezing temperatures, shutting down airports and roadways, and claiming at least 10 lives. Simultaneously, Southern California faced relentless wildfires that scorched thousands of acres, displaced residents, and severely strained emergency services. Globally, a powerful earthquake struck Tibet, causing widespread destruction and leaving countless families in desperate need of assistance. These tragedies underscored the need for collective compassion and support.

Photo Courtesy: Joyce Lee (Attendees recited Buddhas' names and made offerings to Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.)

In response to these disasters, Holy Miracles Temple exemplified its mission of compassion through direct relief efforts. Guided by the teachings of H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III, devotees and volunteers worked tirelessly to gather vital donations for disaster victims. Additionally, the World Buddhism Association Headquarters regularly updated its official website with information about verified organizations supporting wildfire relief efforts, helping those wishing to contribute could do so through trustworthy channels. These collective efforts reflected the temple's unwavering commitment to serving humanity.

The Spring Festival activities at Holy Miracles Temple carried profound significance as spiritual observances and as a living embodiment of Buddhist teachings on compassion and altruism. The temple dedicated the merits of these gatherings to all sentient beings, offering heartfelt wishes for a world free from calamities, for nations to prosper in harmony, and for all people to live in peace.

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